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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Begaye DATE TYPED: 02/20/03 HB 784

SHORT TITLE: Licensing Exemption for Peer Counselors SB _____

ANALYST: Geisler

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY03	FY04	FY03	FY04		
		NFI	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to: HB 395

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

An exemption from the Counseling and Therapy Practice Act is provided for peer counselors who are selected for exceptional modeling and communication skills by program administrators in certain alcohol chemical dependency programs.

Significant Issues

While the Counseling and Therapy Practice Board supports the objective of increasing the number of chemical dependency counselors to meet pressing needs, it is concerned that this bill may allow individuals without the education and experience to perform alcohol and drug abuse counseling.

RELATIONSHIP

Relates to HB 395, which proposes a similar exemption for peer counselors.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Peer counselors are not licensed by the Counseling and Therapy Practice Board, so the need for the exemption proposed by the bill to the practice act is unclear. However, the Board believes it is essential that peer counselors have proper supervision from the appropriate licensed professionals such as alcohol and drug abuse counselors, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, and mental health counselors.

GG/sb :yr